

Presentation to:
Joint Finance and
Appropriations Committee
on Stimulus Funding

By Angela Jones, Administrator
Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
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Agency Overview

35% increase in older blind clients served.

71% increase in clients seen in our low vision clinic.

Increased information, referral and outreach from 426 people in 2003 to over 10,000 in 2008.

44% increase in clients served – 1,198 to 2,087.

At the same time we have accomplished this we have decreased our staff by 10%.

In 2000, 2001 and 2002 the agency underwent routine federal reviews that resulted in 13 corrective action plans which is a significant number for an agency our size. In 2003, the Blind Commission was at risk of losing federal funding due to these findings not having been corrected. In 2005, ICBVI underwent another review. Our federal partners indicated that not only were all findings corrected, it was the best review they had ever completed; not just for a blind agency but for any VR agency.

2000 – 2003, the agency had 6-10 Administrative Reviews per year for a three-year total of 22.

2003 – 2008, in this five year span we had one Administrative Review in 2003.

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- Due to on-going staff morale and administrative problems for years, identical surveys have been; the first was completed in 1999 then in 2005. Here are the results:

	1999	2005
Admin	63%	93%
Quality of Work	61%	92%
Morale	53%	94%
Productivity	68%	97%

- That is an overall increase of 34%.

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- We continue to work collaboratively as a team and communicate on behalf of all the blind and visually impaired needs in Idaho.
 - ICBVI's relationship with both blind consumer groups are going well.

The state of Idaho anticipates receiving \$3,299,632 under the Vocational Rehabilitation Basic Support Federal Grant.

Currently ICBVI has a cooperative agreement with the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) for a split of 88% for IDVR and 12% for ICBVI. ICBVI currently receives the lowest split in the nation for a blind agency; the current national average being 17%.

IDVR has a carryover of \$2.9 million in Basic Support funds from 2008 which must be obligated or spent on or before September 30, 2009. Based on this significant carryover IDVR has at its disposal, ICBVI is requesting to increase the stimulus split from 12% to 22.3%, or \$735,000, to create jobs for the blind and visually impaired in Idaho.

Assessment & Training Center

Assistive Technology for the Assessment & Training Center and production of a training video - \$69,500.

This assistive technology will enable ICBVI to train clients in gaining employment or to assist them in maintaining their current employment. This will also attract clients from surrounding states without a training center which in turn will produce revenue.

The production of a video for ATC will attract students from other states to bring in revenue to the agency of an average of \$18,000 per student per year.

Business Enterprise Program

Site location remodels and replacement of equipment -
\$49,000

The updates will allow the BEP Vendors to increase their income, which in turn can create more employment opportunities in hiring new staff to help with the increased sales.

This will also enable vendors to train other blind clients for employment opportunities and increase their sales and pay which increases revenues to ICBVI.

Miscellaneous

Vehicle replacement, $5 \times \$20,000 = \$100,000$

Five vehicles with current mileage over 100,000 not scheduled to be replaced in 2009 or 2010.

Typically our clients do not drive, which staff frequently meet clients in their homes, help provide transportation for them to attend VR appointments, training, job interviews, job development sessions and other tasks related to gaining employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Hire a contract Assistive Technologist to train clients & staff
- \$156,000

Beginning in 2012, after receiving concentrated training from an Assistive Technology Specialist our Rehabilitation Teachers will be able to assist and train clients in the use of assistive technology, in all regions of the state, which greatly improves the client's chances of becoming employed and/or maintaining employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation - continued

Scanning software/hardware for documents into the case management system - \$5,000

Increased effectiveness of staff time which will allow more time for job development.

Complete ICMS (Idaho Case Management System) upgrades. - \$150,000

Updating the case management system will enable the VR Counselors to cut down their office paperwork by 25-30% and will allow more time on job development in the local communities for our clients.

Vocational Rehabilitation - continued

Trainings across the state with Community Rehabilitation Programs in regards to working with a person who is blind or visually impaired - \$31,000

We will pay for the initial trainings up to the 3 year mark. The CRPs and other stakeholders will be able to see the added value and pick up the cost of the training after the 3 years. The long term impact will be increased employment outcomes for our clients because CRPs and other stakeholders will have a greater effectiveness in working with and placing our blind and visually impaired clients. Again ultimately long term impact could be lowered case service dollars overall per placement and increased employment outcomes.

Vocational Rehabilitation - continued

Contract with a job developer to work with Vocational Rehabilitation staff to educate potential employers who have little knowledge of blindness or visual impairments.
\$118,200

This task of job development will fall onto the VR Counselors after the 2 year training period is up and will help to create jobs.

Independent Living

Purchase Closed Circuit Televisions (CCTV's) for use as loaners for Rehabilitation Teachers to work with clients and also to conduct training and travel around the state to teach our blind and visually impaired clients independent living skills. \$50,000

A traveling low vision clinic will be utilized over a 3 year period to reach clients in regional and rural areas of the state who do not have the money or access to low vision eye care and low vision training. \$59,000

When clients are given the opportunity to increase their confidence and independence in a setting, they are more likely to engage in more community activities and become active consumers again, therefore stimulating the economy. Clients tend to discontinue shopping and eating at restaurants due to difficulty with reading labels, identifying money, and problems with eating techniques. However, when clients have received training in these areas, and they are supported in their endeavors by their peers they are more likely to resume these activities.

Independent Living Older Blind

A traveling low vision clinic will be utilized over a 2 year period to assist older blind in rural areas of the state to access our low vision specialist to assist them in adapting and specialized training in blindness. \$29,000

By providing this low vision training our older blind population will be able to live at home independently.

Funding for Newslines Program – \$30,000 a year for 2 years

Older Blind individuals often have limited access to activities outside the home. This program offers them an opportunity to access national and local news and helps them feel involved in the community. This takes the place of the discontinued ICBVI Radio Reading Program which was cut due to holdbacks.

Total request of Independent Living and Independent Living
Older Blind federal funds: \$198,850

Knowing there will be federal performance expectations attached to utilizing stimulus funds, I contacted our federal partner at the Council of State Administrators for Voc Rehab (CSAVR) prior to setting my goals for ICBVI. I was informed that for an agency the size of ICBVI, I should anticipate a performance expectation that increases employment outcomes of 10%. The focus of the stimulus is jobs, jobs, jobs. Additionally our focus should be the under-served populations and maintaining jobs.

I also was informed stimulus funds are not intended to offset holdbacks but this was never a part of my plan; those funds are gone so we need to plan for it not to be there. I want to plan for the future; I want to find new and innovative ways to provide services to the blind and visually impaired of Idaho.